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SEP 10 1920 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

U. S. Department of Agriculture
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THE FARM WOMAN'S PROBLEMS

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THE FARM WOMAN TELLS HER OWN STORY.

By a singular anomaly the Census places farm women with other home-makers in a class of those having "no occupation". The testimony of the ten thousand farm women who participated in a recently completed farm home survey would indicate that the farm woman might be better described as one having ceaseless occupation, so varied and insistent are the demands made upon her.

The Department of Agriculture, in its desire to extend to farm women the most practical and acceptable assistance possible undertook in cooperation with the State agricultural colleges and farm bureaus to learn from farm women themselves what were their real problems so that the cooperative extension service might be guided in doing its part toward the solving of those problems.

This survey is believed to be one of the most significant pieces of work yet undertaken in the field of farm home studies. The 10,044 records received from farm women were secured largely by home demonstration agents between June and October 1919. These present convincing evidence as to actual living and working conditions under which farm women are meeting their responsibilities as partners in the farming business, and unmistakably point to certain definite kinds of assistance which the cooperative extension service can extend to rural homes of the Northern and Western States.

How the Study Was Made

It may be asked to what extent the homes surveyed are typical of farming conditions over the 33 Northern and Western States in which the studies were made. It was requested that in selecting the counties to be surveyed the following plan be carried out: (1) choose the most typical farming counties of each State; (2) take one or more of the most typical farming communities in each county; (3) secure a record from every farm home in the locality selected, irrespective of size, farm tenure, prosperity of farm family or other conditions; (4) select, if possible, a locality containing from 35 to 50 homes; and (5) include in the survey none but bona fide farm homes.

A study of the returns shows that these requests were fairly well complied with. The figures obtained on the size and type of farms surveyed

and the relative percentage of tenantry and farm ownership agree so closely with the figures shown in the Census of 1910 for the corresponding geographic section as to confirm the belief that the localities were comparatively representative. Although it seems probable that a somewhat better response was obtained from the more progressive element of the communities, and that in consequence the answers presumably show conditions rather above the average.

In considering the details of the survey that follow it should be noted that in no single instance did all of the women answer any one question. For example, 9767 people answered the question regarding washing and ironing; 9400 stated that this work was done at home, making an average of 96 per cent.

It is evident that in some cases, women filling out the blank laid it down at some interruption and in taking it up again omitted certain questions. Many persons, apparently, assumed that if they omitted a question entirely they were indicating with sufficient clearness that the conditions under discussion did not exist in their families. For example, a large number failed to answer questions bearing upon the number of children of various ages, apparently because they had no children. The same is true of questions dealing with members of the family incapacitated by old age or illness; hired men and hired girls; the vacation or "days off" of the homemaker and other points of information. It has, therefore, been necessary to base the average or percentage in each case upon the number of explicit answers instead of on the total numbers of surveys received, a procedure which results in certain instances in figures somewhat higher, it is believed, than actual facts warrant.

One needs but to follow the average woman of the survey through a week's routine to gain some conception of the vitality and skills called into play by her duties as cook, seamstress, laundress and nurse, family purchasing agent, teacher of her children, and factor in community life, as well as producer of dairy, garden, and poultry products.

In considering the figures of the survey one should keep constantly in mind the two sides to the shield. One represents a favored small percentage of 10,044 women whose surroundings, working conditions, and social experiences reach high levels of comfort and progress in farm home life. The other and larger percentage less fortunately placed may give a somewhat exaggerated impression of hardship, unless one thinks of the motive back of the work of wife and mother and the compensations that come to every homemaker in her round of activities for the happiness and comfort of her family. Anyone who has experienced the satisfaction of living in the open country knows that the average farm woman is more fortunately placed in many ways than her average city sister. Studies of living and working conditions of city home-makers bring to light in many homes not only handicaps in home equipment and conveniences but an environment detrimental to health, happiness, and development. The varied interests of the farm woman's life, her contacts with growing things, her enjoyment of seasonal changes in nature, and her freedom from noise, dust, and confusion is not to be lost sight of in considering her comparative opportunity with home-makers of urban communities. It is not, however, the purpose of this discussion to go into these comparisons, but to present to those interested conditions as the survey reflects them. That marked progress has been made during the past few years in raising rural home standards of living can not be questioned. Every

community boasts some homes which exemplify the fact that the country today with a reasonable amount of prosperity and good management offers all of the freedom and independence of rural living with most of the hardships of former days eliminated. The telephone and the automobile free the farm family from isolation. Modern machinery for farm and home takes the drudgery from kitchen and field. Rural engineering has mastered the problems of sanitation for the farm home. Community centers make possible wholesome and inspiring social contacts and mediums of self-expression. With all these modern resources which are taken advantage of and enjoyed by many progressive and prosperous farm families, there is still a large percentage of the total of farm homes in this country which has not yet, according to the figures of the survey, felt to any marked degree the influence of these life-giving factors. It is the realization of this need that stimulates the Department of Agriculture and the State colleges of agriculture to offer the service of extension work with women, a work which would not be needed if all homes had reached the high state of comfort and efficiency attained by the few.

Economic Importance of the Farm Woman

The survey indicates that much loss to family and community through waste of woman power could be prevented by a reasonable amount of planning and well directed investment in modern equipment.

Everywhere we hear of the economic importance of a contented rural population willing to stay on the land and help to build it up. Perhaps the greatest factor in bringing this about will be the healthy, alert, and expert home-makers who, with the other members of the farm family, will see to it that a part of the increased income from the farm is directed toward the improvement of the home as a means of contentment and stimulus for farm work. Economists of our country seeing the steady migration city-ward, recognizing the dearth of farm labor as a limiting factor in production and connecting this with the isolation and inconvenience of rural living conditions, are pointing out that where these exist it is doubtful business policy to use increased income to buy more land with heavy interest charges against it rather than to spend part of that income in raising standards of living so that farm women may find contentment in comfortable homes and young people will not go to the cities in search of attractive living conditions and a satisfying social life.

The independent, venturesome spirit of American youth has in no way expressed itself more characteristically than in the thousands of farm boys and girls who have turned courageous young backs upon a certain type of farm life which offers little that youth craves. This may be a disguised blessing, as the country boy and girl who struggles free of one environment for another which seems to offer greater opportunity may be a factor in preventing the development of the peasant type found in countries where generations of one family live on the same plot of land, not because it yields a satisfying life but because of the difficulties and uncertainties of change.

Hence the interest of the Department of Agriculture in the returns from these studies as to labor, working equipment, and compensations of the farm woman is as practical and as coldly calculating as its interest in farm studies regarding the labor, machinery, and crop returns of the farmer and for the same general reasons.

SOME FACTS FROM THE SURVEY

Modern Equipment Brings Health and Leisure

A walkout might be foreshadowed in some industries where love and service were not the ruling motives by conditions brought out in Table I which shows that the average working day, summer and winter, for over 9,000 farm women is 11.3 hours, and that 87 per cent of 8773 women report no vacation during the year.

Table I. Length of the working day and vacation of farm women

Section of country	Summer		Winter		Women having vacation	
	Work	Rest	Work	Rest	Percentage	Length
	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.	Hrs.		Days
Eastern States	13.0	1.6	10.7	2.4	13	12.4
Central "	13.2	1.5	10.5	2.3	12	10.8
Western "	13.0	1.8	10.2	2.4	13	16.4
Average	13.1	1.6	10.5	2.4	13	11.5
No. Records	9530	8360	9164	8164	8773	1241

Table II shows the amount of time spent in household tasks. Some of these might be eliminated if the principles of modern business were applied, and labor and time spent on others might be lessened if the farm house were as well equipped as the up-to-date barn, the appliances of which the farmer looks upon as so much currency with which to buy efficiency.

Table II. - Farm women's household duties

Section of country	Rooms to care for	Stoves to care for	Kero-sene lamps	Water to carry	Do own wash	Do own sewing	Daily mend	Read
	%	%	%	Percent	Dist-ance	%	%	%
					Feet			
East. States	9.7	1.3	79	54	23	94	83	89
Cent. "	7.7	1.3	79	68	41	97	94	78
West. "	5.3	2.5	77	57	65	97	95	97
Average	7.8	1.6	79	61	39	96	92	94
No Records	9871	9210	9830	6511	6708	9767	9724	9614

Lighting

The installation of a modern lighting system would release some time in the 79 per cent of 9830 homes where kerosene lamps are used. The initial cost would be small when weighed against conveniences and comfort.

Heating

Nine thousand of the seven-room houses (average) are supplied with from one to two stoves, not counting the kitchen range. These add to the daily

work of 54 per cent of the rural women who when heat is needed not only carry into the house the coal or wood to feed these stoves, but according to their statements kindle the fires in the morning and keep the home fires burning throughout the day. This condition could be greatly improved by some type of modern equipment placed in the basement. By this means the whole house could be kept comparatively warm and usable throughout the winter, and congestion avoided which results when the winter living quarters are limited to the kitchen and one or two other rooms. The normal town dweller keeps all of the rooms of this house comfortably warm. Too frequently the farm family contents itself with going to bed in chilled rooms. Breaking the ice in the water pitcher on rising in the morning is not entirely a matter of tradition. The family sometimes fails to connect lack of warmth and facilities for bathing and dressing with ailments and resultant doctor bills which expense would in many cases pay for a modern heating system.

Power

As power on the farm is the greatest of time and labor savers for the farmer so power in the home is one of the greatest boons to the housewife. Of the total number answering the question 48 per cent reported power for operating farm machinery. When we consider that it is often a simple matter to connect the engine used at the barn with household equipment it seems a singular fact that but 22 per cent of the farm homes reporting have this advantage. Power for such frequently recurring tasks as churning and running the washing machine would greatly relieve the farm woman and give her a satisfying sense of modern efficiency. The eastern section reports 50 per cent power on the premises, and 12 per cent in the home. One State reports seven per cent, and another - the lowest - two per cent of power machinery in the home. Only one State shows a larger percentage of power in the home (43) than on the farm (21). One State, the highest, shows 48 per cent of power in the home with 79 per cent on the farm. The one next highest shows 56 per cent in the home and 65 per cent on the farm.

Running Water

It is frequently stated that running water is the pivot upon which much modern convenience and comfort depends. Of those reporting but 32 per cent of the homes have running water, that means, water drawn from a faucet and implies that water may be in other rooms besides the kitchen. Sixty-five per cent of the homes have water in the kitchen only, this means a pump or possibly a rubber hose attached to a barrel located inside or outside of the kitchen. However, in 60 per cent of the homes there is a sink with drain even though in many cases the water used at the sink has to be carried into the house by the pailful. In 61 per cent of the homes into which the water must be carried this work is done by women. Of 6784 women answering the question 20 per cent have bath-rooms in their homes. The State ranking highest reported 48 per cent, and the one ranking lowest three per cent of homes having bathtubs. No one single thing brings so much relief to farm women in meeting their endless tasks as does the use of running water. It is undoubtedly the greatest need in rural home life today on more than two-thirds of the farms. The advent of the bath-room, the indoor toilet and other conveniences dependent upon running water, bring not only untold release from drudgery but a sense of pride and ownership which is as important a factor in a woman's success in her daily round of work as is modern machinery for the success of the farmer.

Table III - Equipment in farm homes surveyed

Section of country	Run- ning Water	Power machin- ery	Water in kitchen	Washing machine	Carpet- sweep- er	Sewing ma- chines	Screen- ed win- dows and doors	Out- door let	Bath tub	Sink and drain
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Eastern	39	12	85	52	58	94	95	87	21	80
Central	24	29	60	67	46	95	98	93	18	52
Western	36	22	45	49	29	95	91	86	23	44
Average	32	22	65	57	47	95	96	90	20	60
No. Record:	9320	9080	6092	9472	9513	9560	9667	9580	6784	9334

Hired Help for the Homemaker

The survey shows the passing of the "hired girl", once so important a factor in the economic and social life of the farm home. The answers received regarding help by the month and by the day are, as noted earlier, somewhat ambiguous. We interpret them to mean, however, that the number of homes employing hired women the year round is almost negligible, while about 14 per cent of the 8693 families reporting employed hired women for short periods perhaps during the peak of the heavy summer work. The average period during which such assistance is available is 3.6 months, the largest number of hired women and the shortest term being in the eastern section, the smallest number of hired women and the longest term of service being in the western section. From eight to ten per cent of the homes seem to employ women to help by the day, an average of $1\frac{1}{4}$ days per week. This assistance seems to be mainly for laundry work and cleaning. The percentage of homes employing such help by the day is larger in the eastern section than in the central and western sections. The growing scarcity of domestic help only further emphasizes the necessity for simplifying the housework and providing the farm home with all modern labor saving devices.

Outdoor Work

In addition to her various duties in the house the farm woman is a productive worker on the farm, as evidenced by the figures shown in Tables IV, V and VI: 36 per cent of the women reporting, help with the milking of the family herd: 56 per cent, take most of the care of the garden: 81 per cent, care for the chickens: 25 per cent, help with the livestock and 24 per cent, help in the field an average of 6.7 weeks during the year.

Table IV. - Women helping in outdoor work and keeping accounts

Section of country	Help with livestock	Help in field	No. weeks per year	Caring for gardens	Keeping farm accounts	Keeping home accounts
	%	%		%	%	%
Eastern	24	27	8.5	41	28	23
Central	26	22	4.9	67	34	33
Western	27	23	6.7	57	33	34
Average	25	24	6.7	56	32	30
No. Records:	9365	9179	2196	9526	8730	8750

The Dairy

Table V shows that 35 per cent of the farm women reporting make butter to sell. Since butter making either for home use or for sale adds one item to the farm women's overcrowded schedule, it would seem to be justified only when a good creamery is not within reach. Experts advise that normally the best utilization of milk is to send the surplus to a creamery, after reserving an ample supply for home use, as the income from the dairy herd is usually greater when the produce is handled by the creamery than when butter is made at home.

Table V - Woman's part of the work of the dairy

Section of country	Cows per farm	Women help milk	Women wash pails	Washing: separa- tor	Butter making	Keeping records	Selling butter	Having butter money
	No.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Eastern	8	24	85	50	43	22	31	9
Central	6.8	45	93	76	66	30	33	9
Western	4.8	37	85	65	74	36	33	16
Average	6.8	36	88	65	60	29	33	11
No. Records	9670	9342	9361	8817	9190	6356	8498	5354

Poultry

The studies of poultry specialists parallel the figures in Table VI: that 81 per cent of all poultry flocks of the country are cared for by women, with the largest per cent, (89) in the Middle West.

Accounts

Getting the most from a dollar and making sure that the home industry pays is recognized as an essential part of good business by 30 per cent of those answering the question regarding household finances, who stated that they were keeping accounts (Table IV). Thirty-two per cent were keeping farm accounts. The records of those reporting show that 11 per cent of those selling butter and 16 per cent of those selling eggs have the money for their own use.

Table VI - Care of poultry; records kept and money returns

Section of country	Women caring for poultry	Average size of flock	No. having poultry for own use	Number having egg money	Number keeping records
	%	No.	%	%	%
Eastern	69	90	13	16	38
Central	89	102	25	16	51
Western	84	71	21	17	41
Average	81	90	22	16	45
No. records	9477	9742	8312	8324	8628

Community

Table VII, indicating an average distance of 5.9 miles to the nearest high school, 2.9 miles to the nearest church, and 4.8 miles to the nearest market, shows that country people are far enough from the center of trade, social and religious activities to tempt the spirit of individualism and to put their neighborliness and piety to the test. It points to the importance of pooling individual interest in common community enterprises such as canning kitchens, buying centers, markets, laundries, salvage shops and sewing rooms as well as social centers for lectures, community sings, dramatics and games, which, if properly handled, break down the isolation of country homes and make possible the accomplishment of many otherwise difficult tasks with a saving of time and labor for the housewife, and often an opportunity for increased income as well as recreation for the entire family.

The automobile contributes materially to community life by reducing the distance factor. It will be noted in Table VII that an average of 62 per cent of farms of the 9545 reporting own cars, with the largest (73) in the Middle West. The telephone also helps to overcome distance in 72 per cent of the 9742 homes reporting. Again the Central West shows an advance with 85 per cent of the total number reporting.

Table VII - Distances, automobiles, and telephones

Section of country	Miles to: district: school	Miles to: high school	Miles to church	Miles to market	Miles to family doctor	Miles to nearest hospital	Miles to nearest trained nurse	Family: use auto	Homes having: phones
	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	%	%
Eastern	1.2	4.3	1.9	3.1	3.5	12.8	9.9	48	67
Central	1.6	5.1	2.6	4.6	4.9	12.7	11.8	73	85
Western	1.7	9.6	5.1	7.7	10.4	17.7	15.5	62	56
Average	1.5	5.9	2.9	4.8	5.7	13.9	11.9	62	72
No. Records:	9627	9767	9726	9708	9837	9605	9463	9545	9748

Health

Fortunate is the farm family whose members know the rudiments of caring for the sick and have an emergency kit fitted up and at hand.

According to figures in Table VII, the average farm home is more than five and one-half miles from the family doctor, nearly 12 miles from a trained nurse, and about 14 miles from a hospital. These distances are shortest in the eastern section and longest in the western section. This means that even though the farm home be provided with an automobile and a telephone, the farm family may be obliged to act unaided in case of sickness, childbirth or serious accident, and that its members perhaps need more than ordinary training to prepare them for such exigencies.

Fifteen to twenty-five per cent of the total families reporting recorded at least one person entirely or partially incapacitated by old age or chronic illness, although on this point there was some ambiguity in the answers, as previously stated.

Along with proper nutrition, clothing and exercise, sanitary conditions have an important bearing on the health of the children and adults on the farm. On the basis of 9580 reports, 90 per cent of rural homes still have an outdoor toilet. Only 20 per cent (6784 answering) have bathtubs and this does not necessarily imply hot water in connection. Almost universally the houses are screened, as indicated by the 96 per cent of 9667 homes reporting. The desirable screened kitchen porch is found, however, in but 32 per cent of the 9502 homes reporting.

Children

Among the surprises in tabulating the surveys was the small number of children in farm homes, 7467 reports show an average of but 1.18 for each home under 10 years of age, and but .39 for each home between 10 and 16 years of age. It may be of interest here to note that the number of children in rural homes of the east falls below the countrywide average, the report showing .9 children under 10 years and .77 children between 10 and 16 years, on a basis of 2573 reports, while that in the western section is the highest with 1.4 children under 10 years (1734 reports) and .97 children between 10 and 16 years (1923 reports).

While there may be some doubt with reference to the figures regarding children as has been indicated, in any event child life is an important factor in rural districts, and for the future of our agriculture, if for no other reason, an intelligent effort should be made and as much money expended to safeguard the child life on the farms as to safeguard other life that has to do with the building up the farmstead. A campaign to bring the child life, the most precious on the farm, up to standards of nutrition and development should excel in intensity campaigns in the interest of cow testing or poultry culling, since a large amount of underdevelopment and malnutrition in rural children, irrespective of the prosperity of the homes from which they come, has been revealed by the recent weighing and measuring tests.

The entire purpose which intimates the work of the cooperative extension service as it pertains to the home is to help the homemaker to so arrange the various departments of her housekeeping that she may secure for herself, her family, and her community the highest possible degree of health, happiness, and efficiency. Hence the facts in this survey become a challenge for increased cooperation with the farming people in placing housekeeping on as sound an economic basis as farming itself.

Sidelights

Interesting sidelights revealing what was really in the minds of some of the farm women when they filled out the blanks of the survey are shown by comments written as footnotes or on sheets attached. These original and intimate expressions of opinion and conviction, not only as to certain specific difficulties or advantages in an individual woman's home life but her analysis and philosophy of the bigger issues of country living, are counted among the most precious records received by the Department.

Briefly stated here are some of the points of view expressed.

Farm women love the country and do not want to give up its freedom for city life. What they do want is normal living and working conditions in

the farm home. "The country offers greater opportunity for satisfying life than the city and country women have as great capacity as city women for the enjoyment of life, but are more handicapped with routine work which absorbs their time and strength."

Because of the shortage of help prevalent throughout the country, women consider it especially important that modern equipment and machinery so far as possible do the work which would otherwise fall to women.

The questions are asked: "Does the farmer lack business sagacity who invests in the sulky plow, used only during one season of the year, and puts off the purchase of the washing machine?" "Is it an error in judgment to justify outlays which result in better crops and buildings, and consider home investments an extravagance?"

The farm woman does not wish to put up with today in the anticipation of something better tomorrow or in her old age, but wants a chance to enjoy today as the only possession she is sure of. The woman feels that she owes it to herself and her family to "keep informed, attractive, and in harmony with life as the years advance."

Women realize that no amount of wise arrangement or labor saving appliances will make a home. It is the woman's personal presence, influence, and care that make the home. Housekeeping is a business as sordid and practical as farming and with no romance in it; homemaking is a sacred trust. "A woman wants time salvaged from housekeeping to create the right home atmosphere for her children, and to so enrich home surroundings that they may gain their ideals of beauty and their tastes for books and music, not from the shop windows, the movies, the bill boards, or the jazz band, but from the home environment."

In the minds of many women is the thought that the man at the head of the house lives under a strain of hard work and competition and that "for him to have a comfortable fireside and a family that is happy, healthy, well fed, well clothed, well sheltered, and contented is his right and his greatest boon."

The farm woman knows that there is no one who can take her place as teacher and companion of her children during their early impressionable years and she craves more time for their care. She feels the need of making the farm home an inviting place for the young people of the family and their friends and of promoting the recreational and educational advantages of the neighborhood in order to cope with the various forms of city allurements. She realizes that modern conditions call for an even deeper realization and closer contact between mother and child. The familiar term, "God could not be everywhere so He made mothers", has its modern scientific application, as no amount of education and care given to children in school or elsewhere outside the home can take the place of mothering in the home. "The home exists for the child, hence the child's development should have first consideration."

Farm women want to broaden their outlook and keep up with the advancement of their children "not by courses of study but by bringing progressive ideas, methods, and facilities into the every day work and recreation of the home environment."

The farm woman feels her isolation from neighbors as well as from libraries and other means of keeping in touch with outside life. She counts her favorite farm paper or woman's magazine among her valued aids. She believes that farm women should come together more often in organized groups to learn from each other, and to gain a mastery of their problems through united effort. "The farmer", she declares, "deals much with other men. The children form associates at school but we, because of our narrow range of duties and distance from neighbors, form the habit of staying at home and to a greater degree than is commonly supposed feel the need for congenial companionship."

Thus the farm woman, although considered conservative and inclined to put the question to things new and untried, expresses an openmindedness and a forward looking spirit. When she is aroused and convinced that any new step in advance is for the best interests of her home she will be found progressive, cooperative, adaptable and ready to make changes no matter how great the personal effort or sacrifice.

The five outstanding problems which the survey would indicate call for special consideration are:-

1. To shorten the working day of the average farm woman.
2. To lessen the amount of heavy manual labor she now performs.
3. To bring about higher standards of comfort and beauty for the farm home.
4. To safeguard the health of the farm family, and especially the health of the mother and growing child.
5. To develop and introduce money-yielding home industries where necessary in order to make needed home improvements.

These changes may most speedily be brought about by:

1. Introducing (a) improved home equipment, principal among which are running water and power machinery, and (B) more efficient methods of household management, including the rearrangement of the inconvenient kitchen and the installment of a modern heating system for the whole house.
2. Helping farm people to understand and apply the laws of nutrition and hygiene, through home demonstrations in
 - (a) child care and feeding,
 - (b) food selection for the family,
 - (c) Training in the essentials of home nursing, and
 - (d) the installation of sanitary improvements.
3. Cultivating the idea that investment in the comfort, beauty, health, and efficiency of the farm home and community is a wise and legitimate expenditure, and perhaps the only means of stopping the drift of young people to the city.

THE SURVEY AND THE EXTENSION SERVICE.

The composite picture here presented of the activities and environment of a large group of farm women naturally raises the question as to what

steps are being taken to relieve these women of some of their present handicaps. Replying to this, it may be stated that for some years the home economics pioneer has given her service to the housewife. Since the passage of the Smith-Lever Act, the home demonstration agent has become a factor in extension work with the home. The data here presented serves a dual purpose,--first it offers a reliable and much needed guide to extension workers in their service to the home, and second it points out to the farming people and others interested, the great value of trained assistance to farm women along definite lines.

In endeavoring to build up a broad educational extension movement, made possible by the Smith-Lever Act, the State Colleges of Agriculture and States Relations Service have, up to this time had a much more limited background of facts on which to base plans for cooperation with rural housewives than with farmers for the reason that little attention has been given to farm home problems, although the farm woman's work has as great economic importance and calls for as high a degree of skill and as wide a range of information and judgment as does the work of the farmer whose equipment and methods of farming have been the subject of many studies made by our agricultural institutions.

With the exception of the investigations of the County Life Commission appointed by President Roosevelt, in 1908, (Senate Document 708), and the inquiry as to Farm Home Conditions made by Secretary Houston in 1914, replies to which were compiled and interpreted (Yearbook 1914, also Reports 103, 104, 105, and 106) and two intensive studies of counties made by the States Relations Service (Canyon County, Idaho, 1916; St. Joseph County, Mich. 1916) comparatively little has been done in this field which throws light on conditions in the North and West. Hence the importance of the present survey, which, resting upon information from many communities, probably gives a fair diagnosis of farm home conditions and when interpreted by extension workers and farming people should point to remedies which may be applied through organized effort and local leadership.

The Farm Bureau

With the introduction and development of the farm bureau idea now nation-wide in its influence, promoting as it does a self-determined program of activities among the people for the economic and educational advancement of rural life, the farmer and his wife are destined to analyze their home problems more and more and to make use of the farm bureau organization and the extension service for the solving of those problems.

The farm is subsidiary to the home as is the home to the farm. Here men, women, and children form a working unit, with common interests and aims, and the farm bureau dealing with this family unit and with community groups views home work not as isolated and detached from the farm but as one phase of the problems of the farmstead. Men and boys work primarily with production in the business of farming and women and girls with utilization and conservation in the business of housekeeping, but all come together in a common interest and for a common goal - homemaking. Farming and housekeeping are not ends in themselves, but necessary means to the realization of this goal.

Prosperity on the farm and efficiency in the house in their last analysis are only valuable as they make people better, wiser and happier by creating and multiplying opportunities for richer and more satisfying rural home and community life. Hence all extension forces, the county agricultural

agents, club agents, home demonstration agents, and specialists are working in their respective fields with this larger aim and purpose. This brings about constant interchange of effort and service. For example, the farm woman's interests and activities go beyond the threshold of her house, when necessary, into such work as poultry raising, bee keeping and marketing of home products. In this she frequently has the help not only of the men folks at home but of the county agricultural agent, the club agent, and men specialists from the college. She may also call upon these for advice and assistance in looking after the water supply and other phases of home improvement. Women extension workers also frequently go out of their special field of home economics work to give advice and assistance, thus expressing, it is believed, the true spirit of the Smith-Lever Act which drawn in broad language refers equally to the service of the farm and home and includes all phases of work that effects wholesome farm life.

The Home Demonstration Agent

Women are everywhere welcoming the services of the home demonstration agent much as farmers welcome the agricultural county agent. This trained home economics worker, employed on Federal, State, and local funds and devoting all her time to the advancement of home efficiency is studying with home-makers the needs of individual homes and communities and is thus able, by linking her technical skill with the practical knowledge and experience of the housewives, to cooperate in the accomplishment of large results by providing a channel through which the State agricultural college and the Department of Agriculture can deal directly with rural home-makers.

Increased moral and financial support of local communities during the present fiscal year 1919-20 for the nearly three hundred agents now employed has shown the belief of the people of the North and West in home demonstration work and placed it on a promising basis which looks towards its establishment eventually in every agricultural county in the North and West.

A few instances are here given to show the methods used and results secured through the partnership of the housewife, the home demonstration agent and the home economics specialist in solving some of the live problems pointed out in this survey.

Home Management

A large family lived in a small house on a prosperous farm; little thought had been given to the expenditure of any part of the farm income for home convenience. One day the mother in this home mentioned to the home demonstration agent that it was difficult to keep the kitchen in order when all members of the family used it as a place to "wash up". The agent suggested the possibility of a wash room with water piped into it. The farmer and his wife became interested. A carpenter was called in to make plans and before he had finished his work a screened porch was added. The wash room later developed into a bathroom complete with modern fixtures. A few more timely remarks brought forth a new water front on the range and hot water tank and sink in the kitchen. About this time there was an item in the farm bureau column of the local paper regarding convenient kitchen arrangement. Following its suggestions this homemaker put blocks under her kitchen table to save bending when at work

and moved the cupboard nearer the stove to lessen steps. Later a power washing machine was bought and a wash house built. The milk separator was moved out of the kitchen into the wash house. This home-maker was so delighted with her transformed work shop that she called in the neighbors to see it and as a result five more women rearranged their kitchens, two put water in the house and three are now planning to purchase power washers.

The annual report of the home demonstration agents for 1919 indicates that a decided advance was made last year in the business side of house-keeping. One hundred sixty-six counties where home demonstration agents were employed carried on some sort of county-wide campaign for increased home efficiency.

One thousand seventy-seven farm families were assisted in rearranging farm house or kitchen as an important first step in efficient housekeeping, the largest number reporting from Iowa.

Home Economics Specialists

Closely associated with the home demonstration agent and preceding her as a pioneer is the home economics extension worker who goes out from the college to conduct extension schools, to train local leaders, and in various other ways to bring to housewives the best methods and processes resulting from laboratory experimentation. Typifying this is the work of the Massachusetts clothing efficiency specialist who personally trained 268 local leaders in courses of clothing efficiency. These women passed on these courses to over 4,000 of their neighbors and acquaintances. As a result four thousand three hundred and twenty garments were made and 9,802 remodeled, with an estimated saving of \$56,998. This work done in cooperation with home demonstration agents is looked upon, in Massachusetts, as the beginning of a state-wide drive for clothing efficiency which will meet the needs of every rural woman of moderate income who wishes to make part or all of her own simpler garments or those of her family.

Replies to the survey indicate that 92 per cent of rural homemakers do a large part of their own sewing.

Anything that shortens the time the farm woman spends on the family sewing or helps her to make or select garments that give better satisfaction for a given expenditure of time and money, and especially anything that helps her reduce clothing expenditures in this era of inflated prices meets a real need.

The annual report for 1919 shows that clothing specialists and home demonstration agents aided through direct teaching and training of volunteer leaders in the making or remodeling of 30,000 garments at an estimated saving of \$218,000. The following lines were stressed: renovating and remodeling, adaptation of commercial patterns, the making of dress forms, free hand cutting and drafting, and selection of textiles.

School Lunch

The hot school lunch project in which extension workers have had a prominent part, has been most successful. The survey indicates that the average country school is about one and one-half miles from the home, which makes it impossible for the country child to share in the hot midday dinner prepared for the family.

An examination of the school dinner pail often reveals that too frequently unappetizing or indigestible foods are the underlying causes for lack of appetite and restlessness of pupils. Well selected food, attractively packed, supplemented by one simple hot dish prepared by the pupils at school has resulted in improved health and better school records. It has also proved the opening wedge for the study of food selection in the home not only for the child but for the whole family, and has increased the use of milk, cereals, and vegetables in the diet.

In Pirtleville, Arizona, where malnutrition was prevalent among school children, the home demonstration agent secured the cooperation of the school principal, the school nurse and the project leader of the Farm Bureau, in putting on a child feeding demonstration. At the end of the six weeks demonstration the children showed marked gains in weight and noticeable improvement in school work and deportment. The county was awakened to the benefits of proper child feeding and the installation of school lunches in a number of outlying schools resulted.

The annual report for 1919 shows that practically all of the 33 Northern and Western States carried on some sort of hot school lunch activities and that more than 3,000 schools introduced school lunches through the influence of the home demonstration agent.

Home Health

One of the outstanding extension projects during the past year has been that of home health. This has included demonstration in first aid, the elements of home nursing, preparation of food for sick and convalescents and preventive hygiene. It is gratifying to know that 202 counties have adopted a home health project and that 28,000 families have cooperated with home demonstration agents in an endeavor to improve their own and their neighbors' health.

In Idaho where vigorous health work has been carried on, several county nurses are employed on state funds, this work being under the general direction of the state home demonstration leader.

Activities Outside the House

The service of the home demonstration agent is not confined to the house, but follows the woman into the garden, the poultry yard, and dairy to assist her in outside tasks when these contribute to home comfort.

Judgment as to relative values usually guide the home-maker in determining the amount of outdoor work it is profitable for her to do either as a money making scheme or as a means of producing food for the family table. Often when the woman lacks even small resources to bring needed comfort and beauty to the home, such industries as poultry raising and gardening provide the needed increase in income from which all the family may derive benefit.

It is poor business from every standpoint, however, if work out of doors means overstrained nerves and muscles resulting from an attempt to take on these duties without releasing any household tasks or if it means neglect of housework or sacrificing attention to children, thus lowering instead of increasing the standard of living.

Statistics show that young women are leaving the rural districts for the cities in larger numbers than young men. Where this is true the influence of the home demonstration agent has been most telling in helping young women to feel their economic importance in agricultural and home pursuits and in discovering ways of making incomes on the land equal to those that could be earned in shop or factory.

Work with Poultry

Poultry work has been promoted in several states through demonstrations along lines of poultry selection, breeding, raising, feeding, housing, culling, canning, preservation of eggs, and cooperative selling of poultry products. Many flocks have been improved when farm women have found through culling demonstrations that 40 per cent of the average flock is non-productive.

Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Missouri, and Vermont carried on intensive poultry culling campaigns in which the home demonstration agents played a prominent part. Schools of instruction were held so that those trained might not only eliminate their own non-producing birds but teach their neighbors through community demonstrations.

In Missouri, 73,765 birds were eliminated from 1593 flocks culled with an estimated saving of \$50,161. In the cooperative buying and selling of eggs 8¢ per dozen more was received than on the local markets.

Milk Products

Making and using dairy products in the home is being stimulated by the work of home demonstration agents who are cooperating in milk campaigns for increased use of milk and milk products in the home and the home manufacture of such milk products as can be most economically handled there. Reports of these agents for 15 states for the year 1919 show that 367,000 pounds of cheese were made by the housewives to whom home demonstration agents and dairy specialists had given assistance in the best methods of making cottage, American and Cheddar cheese both for home consumption and to sell.

It is claimed by those who have made investigations that 25 per cent of country children do not drink milk. A definite drive is now being carried on to persuade country children to drink more milk, and feeding demonstrations are being conducted by home demonstration agents in cooperation with parents and teachers to this end.

One State reports the increase of home consumption to be 433,000 quarts daily; another state where home demonstration work was carried on in only six counties reports 279,000 quarts daily as a result of this work. In Indiana one home demonstration agent in cooperation with the school nurses and doctors proved the value of the increase of milk in the diet by putting on a child feeding demonstration with a group of undernourished children. At the end of six weeks an average gain of 7½ pounds had been made and the school board voted funds to carry on the enterprise.

Community Enterprises

The socializing influence of the many war emergency organizations is now being capitalized by home demonstration agents who are assisting communities to tie up these temporary enterprises with permanent activities in connection with efficient home-making.

Two effective means of reducing home drudgery are the introduction of such modern labor saving equipment in the home as will accomplish necessary work in the most efficient way; and the removal from the home of such activities as can be carried on as cheaply and as successfully through community cooperation as by traditional home methods, for example; since survey replies indicate that 96 per cent of the women do their washing and ironing, it would seem that such an activity might well be removed from the home, releasing each week many hours of the woman's time and saving her from one of the heaviest tasks of the household. Experiments in a number of communities indicate that a cooperative laundry, especially when run in connection with a creamery, is not only a convenience but a paying investment.

Recreation

Community working and trading centers mean much to rural women, not only from the standpoint of economy, time, money, and effort, but as a means of persuading the stay-at-home to walk through her gate and down the road to join her neighbors in some task which is made lighter through cooperation and from which she returns refreshed and encouraged with new ideas and plans not only for her own housekeeping but for the larger housekeeping of her neighborhood. No amount of socialized work, however, takes the place of real recreation, as it looks too earnestly toward a finished result. Carefree recreation for the delight of the moment eases nervous tension, promotes good fellowship, and is as necessary for the mental and physical poise of men and women as it is for boys and girls. Home demonstration agents are, where no other agency is meeting this need, co-operating with farm families in home and community recreation which includes games, chorus singing, dramatization, and pageants.

The extension department of Montana State College, realizing the importance of this, employs a recreation specialist whose work is stimulating a fine social community spirit in many localities in that State where homes are so far apart. Montana is thus putting into practice a conviction that is growing in the minds of extension workers everywhere that while it is their first business to promote efficiency, this should be looked upon as a means of stimulating a richer and more satisfying rural life by freeing the home-maker's time and energy so that she may give attention to the attractiveness and comfort of her home, the training and companionship of her children, the enjoyment of books and neighbors and the building up of recreational, social and educational life of her community. Thus will increase the percentage of active thinking women of service to society and reduce the percentage of passive slaves of routine whose tasks cease only to begin again with a new day.

It is believed that the survey just completed by farm women themselves in cooperation with home demonstration agents is but the first of a series of intensive studies which will from time to time be made not only to show the needs but to mark the advancement that is sure to come as the Government, colleges, and farming people work together on a common program for better agriculture and a richer rural life.